Students' Association
Film and Television Institute of India,
Law College Road,
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Pune
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FTII STRIKE: Day 53

ABVP attacks again-

To begin with, the students of the FTII are fundamentally and most urgently disturbed to report that today morning, on the 3rd of August, a student of Hans Raj College who was distributing pamphlets to college students to inform them about our protest march was attacked with lathis by ABVP members.
In a similar sort of event, yesterday ABVP members barged into the Kirori Mal College seminar room to stop the screening of *Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai*.
This act of severe violence is thoroughly condemned by us and we feel is a most alarming precedent in terms of the clampdown of freedom of speech.

Delhi Protest March-

From 2 p.m onwards several students of the FTII who travelled from Pune assembled at JantarMantar in New delhialongwith Sanjay kak, Rahul roy, Sameerajain, Ramani, Mk raina, AnuradhaKapoor from Theatre, Arvind gaud. Students from IP, IIMC, JNUand Delhi University were also present. Faculty from RamjasMukulManglik, Sahanaand Shomu from KMC, Samera from Aurobindo and facultyfromAUD were also present. Kavita Krishnan CPIMleader,Dharamveer Gandhi from the AamAadmi Party. In addition we had writtensupportform KC Tyagi of the JDU, Mohammed Saleemfrom the CPM, Rajiv shuklaof the INC, D Raja CPI and DP Tripathi of theNCP.
The students and supporters of the protest were stopped not long into their march from JantarMantar to Parliament Street by a heavy police deployment and continue protesting there. 27 protesters were then detained at the Parliament Street police station. When asked why they had been detained, 1 camera and 2 mobile phones were seized by the police. The students from the FTII and our supporters were then released around 7:30p.m with a warning. Two student representatives have now gone to meet the Secretary, I and B Ministry. The rest of the students and stakeholders of the FTII protesting in Central Delhi are now waiting for the student representatives to come back.

RTI Report story from PTI-

In a finding of an RTI report that was revealed today, a note from a senior official of the FTII that will be forwarded to the Prime Minister's officewas brought to notice. The note said that, 'Though never openly said in press, I feel, the current protest has a lot to do with this past recent experience of clash with ABVP members.Visit of same film maker Mr Patwardhan to the campus to support the students and subsequent constant interest shown by ABVP about the student protests and their on and off presence has given a new perspective and complex undercurrent to whole logjam,"
The note also mentioned that the protest appears to be apolitical,and that while the students understand that it is the prerogative of the government to nominate the Chairman, they

believe the actor's appointment would deal a "serious blow" to their ideological autonomy in some sense and compromise their perceived core ideas of institutional autonomy.

On Minister of State's statement in the media-

Additionally, in the light of the Minister of State Rajyavardhan Rathore's statements this morning, we must first of all express amazement at the readiness of the politicians in this country to clasp any minute opportunity to paint any voice that opposes any form of their governance as 'political'. We do have, initially, very fundamental questions to raise against the perception of 'having political intentions' that the incumbent politicians and even large sections of the media and general public cast scorn upon.

We must express the most thorough concern and amazement at how the government continues to deviate from answering the questions we continued to from Day 1 in the form of calling us Naxals, Drug addicts, Anti-nationals, Anti-Hindu's, all without it must be said any tangible proof or logical argument and now, the most recent is 'becoming political'.

Mr. Rathore, rather extraordinarily makes it appears that the government is waiting with open arms to have a dialogue with the students of the FTII as simultaneously continuous communication proposing the very same is constantly ignored.

Mr.Rathore's view with respect to the students 'politicizing' the protest has already been addressed by us, but let us again clarify that after 52 days of the government ignoring our concerns and not engaging with us- the Delhi protest is a most urgent attempt by the students and stakeholders of FTII to have their concerns heard and be engaged with. We also wish to stress that engaging with the Member of Parliaments so that they can raise our concerns in Parliament is a fundamental democratic way of protesting. The Parliamentarians only sit in the LokSabha and the RajyaSabha to serve the nation and it's people, and for their concerns to be articulated is only one of the tenets on which our country functions.

Furthermore, Mr. Rathore's insistence that 'society ka kaam accounts clear karna hota hai' is also an incredible attempt at downplaying the importance of the apex governing body of the FTII and not reflective of the very extensive powers that empower the members of the FTII under the current statutes of the institute. His point that '40 students were living in the institute despite passing out' is also extraordinary as this preposterous figure had already been countered by the Director of the institute.

It has become very frustrating and emblematic of the current situation the students find themselves in that even the MoS can quote incorrect facts after the students have been on strike for 52 days. It can only lead us to believe that he is either unaware of the facts of this institute under his own watch or is purposely and constantly reporting false information to mislead the media and the public at large. Either allegation is extraordinarily serious and cruelly demeans the relevance of students from different socio-economic backgrounds sacrificing their education every day to demand answers and fight against this injustice.

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